of abundantly available Indian thorium resources. Imported nuclear fuels are expected to serve as additional resource to help in achieving a faster growth in the share of nuclear energy in national energy needs in the near term.

(b) The policy of the government is to achieve rapid growth in nuclear power generation capacity in India based on full international civilian nuclear cooperation while continuing the efforts to develop appropriate indigenous technologies towards realization of the ultimate goal of large-scale utilization of thorium for energy production in the form for electricity as well as hydrogen.

Captive Coal Mining Blocks

1784. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India Limited has total 136 captive coal mining blocks;

(b) the location of these coal mining blocks, State-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that about 200 million tonnes of coal would be produced from these blocks;

(d) whether Government have made any efforts to increase productivity of our coal mines; and

(e) the steps proposed to set targets which would increase coal production in the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) Coal India Limited is not engaged in captive mining of coal. So far, a total of 148 captive coal blocks have been identified for allocation to private and public sector companies engaged in generation of power, production of iron and steel and cement.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. CIL have taken the following steps to increase coal production and productivity.

(i) 100 mining projects have been envisaged in X Plan to achieve targeted coal production in the country.

(ii) Improvement in equipment utilization and capacity utilization of mines.

(iii) Mechanization and modernization of existing mines by introduction of intermediate technology for coal loading at face and mass production technology like continuous miners in underground mines where ever technically feasible.

(iv) All new mines are being mined with appropriate mechanization.

(v) Deployment of higher capacity HEMM in mines.

(vi) Introduction of more Surface Mines in open cast mines.

(vii) New areas are being identified with high production longwall mining faces.

(viii) Outsourcing of certain activities/operations in selected mines/ areas.

Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization

1785. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:
SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization is paying less rate of interest than the Employees Provident Fund Organization;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for different rate of interest payment by the two organizations; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government of ensure uniformity in the rate of interest payment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) For the financial years 2002-03 and 2003-04, the rates of interest of Coal Mines Provident Fund (CMPF) were 9% and 8% respectively, whereas the rate of interest of Employees Provident Fund during these two years was 9.5%. The rate of interest of CMPF for the financial year 2004-05 onwards is yet to be decided by the Government.

(c) and (d) The Coal Mines Provident Fund Organization (CMPFO) having its own Board of Trustees is responsible for operating the Coal Mines Provident Fund Scheme, whereas the Employees Provident Fund